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881 304 with the Atchin word for shark, *bahi*, one of a long series of Melanesian words meaning "shark," including

Atchin	*bahi*
Mota	*pagoa*
Gilbert Islands	*bakoa*
Marshalls	*bako*
Ponape	*poko*
New Guinea [1]	*paowa*

all derived from the Indonesian *pa-iwak* meaning "giant fish." What is apparently a dual use of the word is seen in the phrase used on the morning of the operation in the Sulol district of Ambrim, namely, "*pakvi* is going to fight today," [2] in which *pakvi* is the name of the rite though the phrase can only mean that it at the same time represents a devouring monster.

Circum-incision called *Kol-kol*

The only term that I recorded as being applied specifically to circum-incision is that given to me by the natives of Atchin, who themselves only incise, for the operation of circum-incision performed among the neighbouring Big Nambas. This word is *kol-kol*, which I think can hardly be related to the *kolekole* rites in the Banks Islands, but is more likely to be connected with the same two syllables appearing in the name given to the creator-deity *Bar-kol-kol* or *Bar-kul-kul* in South Raga and in the neighbouring district of Olal on Ambrim, in which latter place, according to Suas,[3] he is believed to have introduced circum-incision. What further significance is attached to the word I cannot say, though Tattevin [4] suggests that the syllable *kol* in *Bar-kol-kol* means "strong." Possibly relevant to this is the fact that both among the Big Nambas and in South Raga circum-incision is associated with the organised homosexuality between novices and their tutors referred to below, and that among the Big Nambas it is said that the purpose of this is to make the passive boy-lover's male organ "grow strong." [5]

(3) HOMOSEXUALITY

838 *Organised homosexuality a feature of circum-incision areas.*

I have already called attention to the organised practice of homosexuality existing in the two areas where circum-incision replaces the more usual incision, namely, among the Big Nambas and in South (and apparently also in North) Raga. The explanation usually advanced with regard to the Big Nambas is that the chiefs have so many wives [6] that the commoners have to content themselves with substitutes in the form of

[1] Taken from Codrington, 2. He does not state what part of New Guinea.
[2] Rivers, 3. The corresponding phrase in Atchin is *baho pu pal*, meaning "*baho* will sacrifice."
[3] Suas, 1911, p. 906. [4] Tattevin, 1, 1926, pp. 389-90. [5] See p. 488. [6] See p. 740.

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boys. This explanation is, to say the least of it, unlikely, and is quite certainly not applicable to South Raga where there are no chiefs.

Homosexuality among the Big Nambas.

If we examine the facts it is found, on the contrary, that homosexuality is in this area intimately bound up with circum-incision. In Deacon's words, "When it has been decided to hold the circumcision rites, the father of each candidate seeks out someone who will act as guardian to his boy during the period of seclusion. . . . Such a guardian is called *dubut*; the novice or candidate is usually called *mugh vel*. The relation between these two is, henceforth, of a very special nature, to understand which it is necessary to know something of the organisation of male homosexuality in this district.

"Among the Big Nambas, as in North Raga, homosexual practices between men are very highly developed. Every chief has a number of boy-lovers, and it is said that some men are so completely homosexual in their affections, that they seldom have intercourse with their wives, preferring to go with their boys. Up to the time that a boy assumes the bark-belt, the badge of the adult male,[1] he should not take a boy-lover, but himself plays this rôle to some older man. It is only after he has donned the bark-belt that he enjoys this privilege. It is clear, then, that for some time before a boy is circumcised he belongs to one of the older men. A boy-lover, like a circumcision candidate, is termed *mugh vel*, and he refers to his 'husband' as *nilagh sen*.[2] . . . The association between a *nilagh*

[1] The bark-belt has nothing to do with initiation, and is assumed apparently without ritual some time later.

[2] *Nilagh* probably consists of the indefinite article *ni-* and *lagh*, the equivalent of the Vao *laghe*, "to marry." *Sen* is clearly the third person singular possessive pronoun meaning "his," so that *ni-lagh sen* means "his *ni-lagh*," and Deacon's subsequent phrases "a *nilagh sen*" and "the *nilagh sen*" are anomalous.

Deacon points out that this term is that usually used for the "sister's husband," adding, however, that when employed by a tutor for his boy-lover "it is used in jest, for the rules regulating the behaviour of relations by marriage make it impossible for a man to have homosexual connection with his wife's brother," this individual being equivalent to the sister's husband through the operation of sister-exchange marriage. Whether Deacon was right or not in saying that this kinship term is used in these circumstances only in jest (and he never himself penetrated the Big Nambas country), it is not without interest to note that, according to Professor Radcliffe-Brown quoting from Klaatsch, in the southern part of the Kimberley district of Western Australia, where there is a 4-section system of kinship, the rules governing homosexual intercourse are in fact similar to those governing marriage. That is to say that it is there the custom for a man before marriage to take as a boy-lover a member of the prescribed kinship section from which he must later obtain his wife, and who is therefore sociologically equivalent to the wife's brother and sister's husband, such intercourse being forbidden with a boy of any other kinship section as strongly as if the relation were a heterosexual one. The custom differs from that among the Big Nambas in that, in Western Australia, homosexual intercourse is not usual after marriage, but the kinship regulation is so similar to that indicated by the Big Nambas terminology that it may be questioned whether this is in fact used only "in jest," and strongly suggests a similar regulation among these North Malekulan people.

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sen and his *mugh vel* is a very close one; indeed, the former has complete sexual rights over his boy. . . . The boy accompanies his 'husband' everywhere; works in his garden (it is for this reason that a chief has many boy-lovers), and if one or other of the two should die, the survivor will mourn him deeply. . . .

"Whether it is the *nilagh sen* who is asked to play the part of *dubut* [guardian] during the circumcision rites is not certain, but after the arrangements for circumcising the lad have been made, the *dubut* has exclusive sexual rights over him. He is now the boy's 'husband' and is extremely jealous of any other man, not excepting the guardians of other boys, securing his *mugh vel* and having intercourse with him. So much is this the case that he will not allow him out of his sight. The *dubut* himself, however, cannot have sexual access to the boy throughout all the thirty days' seclusion which accompanies the circumcision rites. From the time of the operation until the wound is healed, intercourse is forbidden, and the *dubut* only plays the part of a guardian who cares for the novice's physical needs. But when the wound is healed he resumes his 'marital' rights and continues to have relations with the boy until some time later the latter purchases his bark-belt. The reason, or rather the rationalisation, which the natives put forward for their homosexual practices is that the boy-lover's male organ is caused to grow strong and large by the homosexual acts of his 'husband.' This growth of the penis is supposed to be complete by the time that the bark-belt is assumed." [1]

On the thirtieth day the novices issue from their seclusion, and each purchases his newly won penis-wrapper from his maternal uncle. "He does not acquire the bark-belt on this occasion, but at some later date (the length of interval was not stated and probably varies) the erstwhile novice pays his *dubut* a few coconuts or some tobacco for it. Until this payment is made the *dubut* continues to have homosexual relations with the lad, but when once the latter has assumed his bark-belt this bond is severed and he, being now a 'man,' can take a boy-lover himself." [2]

Homosexuality symbolises a spiritual connexion between the living and the dead in the male line of descent.

It is, I think, quite clear from this, and from the facts that organised homosexuality is associated with circum-incision also in Raga and that neither are found elsewhere in the group, that, whatever may be the various causes of homosexuality in other parts of the world, it is here definitely connected with circum-incision. In seeking a reason for this we must, I think, be careful not to dismiss as pure rationalisation the natives' statement recorded by Deacon that the reason for homosexual acts is to make the boy-lover's organ grow strong.[3] Such fantasies are

[1] Deacon, 4, pp. 260-2. [2] Ibid., 4, p. 267.
[3] Compare also the Tanna belief that the operation itself makes a man fruitful (see footnote p. 479).

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common with homosexuals among ourselves, and in the special case now being considered we have to remember two facts. First of these is the high esteem in which the penis is held, as seen in the extreme reverence for the glans due to the operation which is itself a sacrifice. In the second place, the Big Nambas represent an extreme form of patrilineal culture which they have carried to a pitch exceeding all other New Hebrides tribes in the very low status which they accord to women. It would appear, therefore, that both circum-incision and organised homosexuality are an expression of the extreme holiness of men over against women and of the triumph of patrilineal descent over the former matrilineal system. In this way, just as in the Maki on Vao the continuity of divine inspiration is transmitted to each generation by means of physical contact with the kava root held by the Speaker who himself represents all those ancestors who have previously performed the rite,[1] so I suggest that among the Big Nambas the act of homosexuality may well represent to the natives a similar transmission of male power by physical means. That this power comes, moreover, from the ancestors in direct succession and not merely from the active partner in the union, and is therefore a spiritual conception, is shown, I think, by one of the "hoaxes" recorded from Lambumbu. In these hoaxes the actors, who themselves have, of course, already been initiated, represent ghosts, and on one occasion a number of them "lie down on their backs, in such a way that the feet of one man rest by the head of the next. In this way a file of prostrate bodies is made to reach from the door of the seclusion hut as far as the gongs. *Nevar*[2] leaves (such as are used for cooking puddings) are then rolled up, strapped around with others and fastened to the men so that they reach, like gigantic penises, from one man's middle, across his belly, chest, and head, almost to the next man's testicles. These men now lie with their eyes shut and sing in a faint mysterious manner. It is dark. The candidates are led out and made to go up and pull the huge penises, which wobble in a terrifying manner."[3] We have already seen that the upright slit gongs represent ancestors, so that, despite the farcical nature of the hoax, which is in keeping with all such performances in North Malekula and the Small Islands, there can be little doubt that the intention is to symbolise continuity with the ancestral ghosts in the male line by means of the homosexual act. So, just as in some matrilineal communities the female line of descent is conceived of as an umbilical cord joining all generations to the first ancestress, so here the continuous penis unites all those belonging to the male line of descent.

Once the practice of homosexuality became established, though primarily on spiritual grounds, it is easy to see how by a process of secular-

[1] See pp. 282, 376.

[2] Atchin *re-war*.

[3] Deacon, 4, pp. 253-4. For other hoaxes see ibid. pp. 253-5, 263-6; also Harrisson, 2, pp. 47-8. Yet others will be given in my forthcoming work on Atchin.

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isation it could be adopted as an everyday practice in the manner described by Deacon, and has led also to the adoption of the very large penis-wrappers worn by these men.

Active homosexuality in circum-incision areas replaced in the Small Islands by threats of homosexual action on the part of ghosts.

So much for the Big Nambas. From Raga, the only other area from which organised homosexuality has been reported, we have no details by which to test the validity or otherwise of what has just been suggested.

When we turn to those tribes in this area which practise only the simpler operation of incision, we find that, though homosexuality exists among them, it is unorganised and not carried to anything like the same extent as among the Big Nambas.[1] Thus in the Small Islands though novices address their tutors (or guardians), as among the Big Nambas, as "husband" and in some cases the tutor reciprocates by calling his novice his "wife," they do not necessarily have homosexual relations and the terminology does not extend into secular life, but, on the contrary, the novices throughout the rites are constantly threatened with homosexual action on the part of ghosts.

Relation between incision and circum-incision.

Such threats without action suggest the possibility that the whole motive of ghostly homosexuality has been derived from the circum-incision area, and in this case Rivers may be right in regarding incision as being a degraded form of circum-incision, though not on the grounds he states. On the other hand, the Small Islands attitude towards ritual homosexuality as a spiritual phenomenon connected almost exclusively with ghosts and with initiation may indicate a more archetypal view. In this case circum-incision as an exaggerated form of incision would fall into line with other exaggerated forms of culture indulged in by the Big Nambas such as their extreme cannibalism and the incessant wars they wage among themselves.

I do not propose to attempt to solve this problem, but will content myself with pointing out the fact that, while the operation of incision is spread over almost the whole of the Southern and Central New Hebrides, circum-incision as practised among the Big Nambas and in South Raga occurs only in the extreme north of this area. Here also the moot point is raised as to whether it is the starting-point from which the degraded practice of incision spread south or whether, since according to Codrington incision came from the south, it is an ultimate development and is itself an exaggerated form of incision. In this respect it must be remembered that Codrington's evidence rests on the very slender foundation of a purely local movement from Ambrim to Raga and very recently northwards to Maewo. But since any coastal movement spreading from Malekula to

[1] See p. 487.

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Ambrim in the way that the Maki has spread might then automatically move northwards along the eastern chain of islands, this is in fact no evidence at all regarding the larger movements of culture.

Homosexuality in Egypt and Fiji.

Two facts of comparative ethnology should be mentioned before leaving this subject. We have seen how in the district of Lambumbu the homosexual relationship takes on a fearful form when connected with ghosts. The same is true also of the Small Islands, where it is always connected with threats. It is therefore of interest that in ancient Egypt ritual homosexuality appears to have been connected with punishment or revenge. This is summed up in an article by Mr. G. D. Hornblower [1] in which he says, "the notion of unnatural vice seems to have been connected in the ancient Egyptian mind with enemies," and cites the case of Set threatening to treat his dire enemy Horus as a woman, adding: "It may be that the word *hmti*, meaning 'woman-like,' which is an insulting term applied to enemies, refers, at least inferentially, to the indignity in question." He then mentions how, at an annual festival held in Cairo on the birthday of a Sheikh, "a public representation was given on a cart of the act of paederasty," which appears to have been regarded as a religious act and was suppressed some forty years ago.

Replying to this article the late Professor A. M. Hocart wrote a letter to *Man* which, however, was never published, but from which Mr. Hornblower kindly allows me to quote. He says: "His [Mr. Hornblower's] facts tempt me to bring forward a suggestion which I have for years had in mind, but been unable to confirm so far. It is that sodomy was once recognised between cross-cousins." He adds: "This rests on the flimsiest of foundations," but I include it here because his evidence is taken from the hill tribes of Fiji who, as stated by Dr. Haddon, in certain physical respects resemble the Big Nambas,[2] and some of whom also practise circumcision.[3] The facts cited by Hocart are as follows:

"(1) In the hill tribes of Fiji male cross-cousins address one another as *veidhakavi*, which means 'to do to one another,' a euphemism for copulation. It may, however, be that the term has been improperly transferred from cross-cousins of opposite sexes.

"(2) There is in various parts of the Pacific a very close bond of friendship which I take to be a survival of cross-cousinship among people who have lost the relationship. In Hawaii it is called *lei kane*, 'eating man,' a term which is also a euphemism for sodomy.

"(3) Cross-cousins continually fight and cheat one another in sport. This sporting, and sometimes rough, feud has in many cases degenerated into earnest."

[1] G. D. Hornblower, *Man*, August 1927, No. 97.
[2] A. C. Haddon, 1, p. xxii.
[3] Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 436, quoting Fison.

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Hocart further points out that the custom of cross-cousin marriage was at one time much more widespread than it is today, suggesting that it may formerly have occurred also in Egypt. However this may be, it is interesting to note that in a 4-section system the male cross-cousin is the brother of the prescribed bride, so that, if we may take the evidence that in the hill tribes of Fiji men marry their mothers' brothers' daughters as indicating the former existence of a 4-section system in that island, this evidence falls into line with the fact pointed out above that in Western Australia and possibly also among the Big Nambas a man took as his boy-lover a member of his wife's marriage section, and that it was only later that this love-relationship turned into one of joking and mutual violence.

(4) THE *KWAT* ELEMENT

The last subject to be dealt with in this survey of Initiation in North Malekula and the Small Islands is the third element listed on p. 475 under (*c*), of which the chief features are the hoaxes and the thirty-day period of seclusion. Closely bound up with this is a special term applied in this region to the guardians or tutors [1] who among the Big Nambas are also the novices' chief partners in the homosexual relationship. This term, applied irrespective of whether the operation itself is that of incision or circum-incision, has approximately the same geographical distribution as the term *bagho* and its dialectical variants, all probably meaning "shark," used to designate the newer form of the rite. The corresponding term for novice has the same distribution. Recorded examples are:

	Guardian or Tutor	Novice
Vao	*to-mbat*	*mov ghal*
Atchin	*to-bat*	*moh wal*
Matanavat	*tu-mbat* [2]	—
Big Nambas	*du-but* [3]	*mugh vel*
Laravat	*n-to'mbat* [4]	*murh vel*
Lambumbu (*no-wei na-mbŏg* form of the rite)	*tŏ-mbat* [5]	*nŏ-vali*

To-mbat etc. equivalent to Kwat, A-mbat, etc.

I am unable to translate the term used for the novice. What is of interest is that used for the guardian or tutor, which is a combination of the personal prefix *to*,[6] *tŏ* or *du*, with the word *bat*, *mbat* or *but*. This word

[1] Deacon uses both terms "guardian" and "tutor." In my own account of initiation I use "tutor."

[2] Harrisson, 2, p. 46.

[3] Deacon, 4, p. 260. The same terminology is used in the rites of the *Ni-mangki Tlel* society which Deacon likens to the Banks Islands *Tamate* societies, with which are associated the *Kwat* societies mentioned below (Deacon, 4, pp. 236 ff.).

[4] Ibid. p. 256. [5] Ibid. p. 250. [6] See p. 208, note 1.

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of Malekula, which retains many early matrilineal features. For, whereas in the Small Islands it is the younger of two brothers who is said to have discovered the operation by accidentally cutting himself with a bamboo,[1] in Matanavat the two persons concerned were a man and his sister who, climbing a bread-fruit tree to cut down the ripe fruit, let fall her bamboo knife so that it accidentally cut the man's foreskin.[2]

With these preliminary explanations, it is now possible to proceed with a description of the rites as they are practised on Vao.

Relation between Novices and their Tutors. Threats of Homosexual Action on the Part of Ghosts

I have already referred to the terminology in use throughout North Malekula and the Small Islands between novices and their tutors. In Vao novices and all those not previously initiated are called *mov ghal*. In contrast to these, all initiated persons are called *to-mbat*, a term which has been fully discussed on pp. 492 ff. Each novice has a special *to-mbat* detailed to look after him, to tell him what he must do, to tend his wound and share his beatings. This man, usually a lodge-brother, I propose to refer to as the novice's tutor. Between these two a special relationship exists, which at first sight would appear to indicate the same homosexual relationship as obtains between novice and tutor among the Big Nambas. Thus, in the ritual terminology of Vao the tutor is said to be "married" (*e lagi ni*) to the novice, who refers to him sometimes as *teme natuk*, one of the terms used by a wife for her husband. Older initiates not acting as tutors are referred to as "unmarried" *to-mbat*.

It was, however, repeatedly denied by the Small Islanders that this terminology implied actual homosexual connexion between tutor and novice, and, being usually lodge-brothers, there is here no possibility of the two belonging to intermarrying kinship sections such as would appear to be indicated by the more specialised terminology in use between men and their boy-lovers among the Big Nambas. Indeed, so far as I could learn, though homosexuality is not unknown in the Small Islands, it is rare, and such relationships as exist almost always consist in a Small Island boy being the passive partner in a temporary union with an adult native from the Malekulan mainland, for which he is rewarded by the present of a money-mat in the same way as men throughout the group make such gifts to their girl-lovers. The Small Islanders' attitude towards such relationships are a comic look and the remark, "What a waste of time when there are so many women." On Atchin, more closely connected with the customs of the Malekulan mainland, the tutor actually addresses his novice as "my wife." Even there, however,

[1] See p. 496.

[2] Harrisson, 2, pp. 48-9.

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where I myself had the good fortune to witness most of the rites, I was assured that this terminology did not indicate actual homosexual union, and the same is true of Vao where, though the novice does indeed sometimes speak of his tutor as his "husband," the more usual term used is *to-mbat na-nuk*, "my *to-mbat*," to which the tutor reciprocates by calling the novice *mov ghal na-nuk*, "my novice."

On the other hand, as will be seen below, the novices are being constantly threatened with homosexual attacks by ghosts, and in so far as during the hoaxes the tutors and other initiates often take the part of ghosts they may be said to have at least a spiritual connexion of this nature.

THE RITES

1. PREPARATORY PERIOD: ERECTION OF INITIATION HOUSE

Owing to the large number of pigs, yams, bananas and other produce required for the rite, and to allow time for the building of a special initiation house, it is customary to announce the coming performance a year before the actual operation is expected to take place.

This house, built just behind the Upper Side of the dancing-ground,[1] is called *n'ime na-mbagho*, "Initiation House," in modest contrast to the grander style of "Initiation Lodge" employed on Atchin and in North Malekula,[2] thus marking its closer connexion with the older and simpler form of the rite. Here, after the operation, the novices will sleep for thirty days, have their wounds tended by their tutors, and undergo ordeals and hoaxes. Here also, after the thirty days are over, they will continue to sleep till opportunity arises for them to undertake the overseas voyage for the purpose of Initiation into Sex.

Novices and Tutors are beaten.

The whole preliminary period is occupied with the assembly of materials for, and the construction of, the initiation house. This provides opportunity for numerous pleasantly exciting journeys to the mainland, whence most of the materials are fetched.

Now also occurs the first foretaste of the trials of initiation in that on every such occasion, both when the materials are landed on the beach and when later they are transported to the dancing-ground, not only the novices but also their tutors are beaten with sticks by the older initiates. These beatings henceforth become a feature of each and every act connected with initiation during the preparatory period before the actual operation. Whether this be the landing on the beach of bamboo rafters

[1] See Map IV.

[2] In these places the words for Initiation Lodge are:
Atchin *lol-hamal*.
Big Nambas *na-ghamal bagho*.
Lambumbu *na-amel na-av-avien* or *na-mur-mur*.
All these contain variants of the word *ghamal* as opposed to the Vao *n'ime*, "house."